

**GOAL 9**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**The residents of Benton County recognize the importance of education and productive work and respect the rights and needs of individuals to pursue livelihoods of their choice that offer sufficient and sustainable material reward and personal satisfaction.**

Benton County Comprehensive Plan Value Statement

## GOAL 9

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Overview

Benton County's economy is expected to remain stable over the next ten years. The total employment of Benton County in April 2000 was estimated to be 39,997. The total employment for April 2005 was estimated to be 40,152. This is a total growth of 0.3% over the past 5 years and an annualized growth rate of 0.08% per year.

Existing industrial sectors prominent in the county's economy are expected to decline slightly, while employment in lumber and wood products industries is expected to remain stable, with increasing emphasis on value added products.

Job loss is expected to continue in the manufacturing sector of the economy as a result of downsizing at Hewlett Packard's Corvallis site. Recent reductions have resulted in the loss of approximately 1,000 jobs. These reductions may have a multiplier effect of additional job losses around the state and in the Corvallis area.

Jobs in government, including positions at Oregon State University, the county's largest employer with approximately 8,000 employees, are expected to remain relatively flat over the next ten years (2004 -2014) according to industry employment projections from the Oregon Employment Department.

The relatively low annual average unemployment rate within Benton County is deceiving, with higher unemployment in neighboring counties as a result of the lack of entry level and affordable housing in Benton County.

The Bureau of Census and Population Research at Portland State University estimated the county's population in 2005 at 82,835 – an increase of 4,682 since the 2000 Census or a 1% annual rate of growth.

Marples, May 2005, names the Corvallis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) as the slowest growing of the 26 MSA's in the northwest.

Population projections assume that the available labor supply has been largely absorbed within the county and projected new jobs will require new residents. A 0.86% annual rate of population growth is expected between 2005 and 2010 and a 0.80% annual rate of population growth between 2005 and 2015. This translates into a county population forecast of approximately 85,721 residents in 2010, and 88,995 residents in 2015.

The number of those 62 years of age or older in Benton County continues to increase (14.3% from 1990 to 2000) at a higher rate than nationally (9.6% from 1990 to 2000). An increase in the number of people of retirement age creates an increase in the availability of employment in healthcare and social service sectors.

The population of those 18 years and under increased by only 2.6% in Benton County compared to the national increase of 10.9%. Enrollment in Corvallis School District 509J has decreased from 7,328 in 2000 to 6,842 in 2004. Enrollment in Philomath School District 17J has declined from 1885 in 2000 to 1741 in 2005.

Future growth will largely be the result of private investment decisions and new or expanded enterprise. The County is working to establish a climate that fosters private investment through its participation in cooperative economic development efforts. The County is concerned with the economic, social and environmental impacts of development.

The following policies are designed to further guide the County in meeting economic development objectives. The policies lay the framework to encourage diversified markets and sustainable business practices and support research activities, commercialization of research, workforce training, tourism, home-based businesses and an efficient transportation system.

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## Statewide Planning Goal 9

To provide adequate opportunities throughout the state for a variety of economic activities vital to the health, welfare, and prosperity of Oregon's citizens.

Comprehensive plans and policies shall contribute to a stable and healthy economy in all regions of the state. Such plans shall be based on inventories of areas suitable for increased economic growth and activity after taking into consideration the health of the current economic base; materials and energy availability and cost; labor market factors; educational and technical training programs; availability of key public facilities; necessary support facilities; current market forces; location relative to markets; availability of renewable and non-renewable resources; availability of land; and pollution control requirements.

Excerpt from  
OAR 660-015-0000(9)

### Cross-References

Additional policies related to this goal:

- Goal 2 Land Use Planning
- Goal 3 Agricultural Land
- Goal 4 Forest Land
- Goal 12 Transportation

## Benton County Goal

### Economic Development

To support a stable and sustainable local economy, vital to the health, welfare, and prosperity of County residents.



Courtesy of Tyee Wine Cellars

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Policies

- 9.1.1 Benton County shall work regionally and locally to promote sustainable economic development.
- 9.1.2 Benton County shall encourage the expansion of industries that bring outside dollars into the local economy.
- 9.1.3 Benton County shall encourage the retention and expansion of businesses that are committed to sustainable practices.
- 9.1.4 Benton County's local and regional transportation network should operate efficiently and effectively in order to economically move materials and products to and from markets.
- 9.1.5 Benton County shall encourage economic development activities that utilize the innovative strengths and knowledge derived from research.
- 9.1.6 Benton County shall promote tourism by encouraging preservation and enhancement of cultural, historical, and recreational resources.
- 9.1.7 Industrial and commercial uses in or near resource lands which are accessory to a resource use shall be located as near as is practical to that resource use.
- 9.1.8 Benton County shall support educational institutions and work force training programs in order to maintain an educated work force and low unemployment rates, and to meet the needs of existing and future businesses and industries.
- 9.1.9 Benton County shall support organizations in their efforts to coordinate economic development programs.
- 9.1.10 Benton County shall encourage home based businesses and shall provide standards that remove barriers and ensure neighborhood compatibility.
- 9.1.11 Benton County shall support the continuation and expansion of rail service throughout the County.
- 9.1.12 Benton County shall support Oregon State University's research efforts that improve farm and forest practices and related businesses.

## 9.1 General Policies

### Multi-Jurisdictional Boards:

- Workforce Investment Board
- Economic Development Partnership Organization



Gathering Together Farms



Georgia Pacific - Philomath

### Defined Terms

- historic resources
- resource lands
- sustainable
- sustainable economic development

See **Appendix** for definitions

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## Findings and References

**9.1.a** A number of organizations within the county promote economic development and diversification of the local economy.

**9.1.b** Currently a number of employers sell materials and products outside the county and internationally. Diversifying markets provides stability to employers when downturns occur in the local marketplace.

**9.1.c** The Benton County Sustainability Policy encourages county residents to use, develop, and protect our resources at a rate and in a manner that enables people to meet their current needs and also preserve resources for future generations.

**9.1.d** An efficient transportation system (including ODOT highways and rail lines) is important for moving products to and from their markets and is also important to maintaining the county's economy.

**9.1.e** There were 54.15 patents for every 10,000 people in Benton County versus 7.7 in the U.S. Patent growth between 1990 and 2001 was 14.96% in Benton County vs. 5.9% in the U.S.

EDP Economic Facts

**9.1.f** In 2003, visitors spent 65.1 million dollars in Benton County. The visitors helped support 1,180 travel related jobs in Benton County.

Dean Runyan Associates,  
Travel Oregon Online 2004

**9.1.g** Oregon Statewide Planning Goals encourage urban uses to locate within the cities urban growth boundaries in order to preserve resource lands in the county. Commercial and industrial activities are generally better suited to locations inside urban growth boundaries where urban services and a labor pool are available. However, industrial activities that relate

to natural resources should be given the opportunity to locate near the resource that is being utilized.

**9.1.h** Benton County has historically maintained one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. In addition, residents have the highest education of any county in the state, with 47.4% of adults over 25 having a bachelor's degree or more.

US Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 31, 2005

**9.1.i** A significant portion of the nation's research in the fields of forestry and agriculture takes place at Oregon State University.

**9.1.j** Organizations such as the Economic Development Partnership provide economic development services and support to Benton County and the cities of Corvallis, Philomath, Monroe, and Adair Village.

**9.1.k** Home businesses continue to grow across the country and provide an economically viable alternative for many business start-ups.

**9.1.l** Rail transportation is more energy efficient than trucking and in the long term will result in a more sustainable transportation network.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Findings and References

### References

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